

Appl. No. : 10/762,772
Filed : January 22, 2004

REMARKS

Please reconsider the above-captioned application in light of the above amendments and the following comments.

Amendments Place Application in Condition for Allowance

The Examiner objected to Claims 12 and 17 as including terms that lacked antecedent basis. In fact, these informalities arose because inconsistent words were mistakenly included. These claims have been amended to replace the inconsistent words with the correct terms, for which there is appropriate antecedent basis. These amendments simply correct these errors, and do not narrow the claims in any way. Also, no new matter has been added.

The Examiner allowed Claims 8-10 and 18-20, and indicated that Claims 4-7 and 13-17 would be allowable if rewritten into independent form. The Examiner rejected Claims 1-3 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(b) as unpatentable over the combination of Briggs '437 and U.S. Patent No: 4,470,176 to Vermeulen. Applicant believes these references are not properly combined and, even if combined, fail to teach or suggest all of the limitations of the claims. Nevertheless, in order to speed prosecution, Applicant has amended the claims so as to recite the subject matter identified by the Examiner as being allowable. More specifically:

- Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of previous Claim 7, and thus is currently in condition for allowance.
- Claim 4 has been rewritten so as to put it into independent form, and thus is currently in condition for allowance.
- Claim 12 has been amended to include the limitations of allowable Claim 14, and thus is currently in condition for allowance. Claims 15 and 17 have been amended to depend from amended Claim 12.
- Claim 18 has been rewritten so as to put it into independent form, and thus is currently in condition for allowance.
- Original Claim 13 has been rewritten in independent form as new Claim 24, which is thus currently in condition for allowance.

In addition to new Claim 24, which corresponds to previous Claim 13, several new claims have been added to more fully claim the subject matter Applicant considers to be the invention.

Appl. No. : 10/762,772
Filed : January 22, 2004

For example, new Claims 21-23 depend from allowable Claim 18; new Claim 25 depends from allowable new Claim 24; new Claims 26-28 depend from allowable Claim 12; and new Claims 29-31 depend from allowable Claim 1. The new dependent claims recite additional patentable subject matter. No new matter has been added by the new claims.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections and objections set forth in the outstanding Office Action are inapplicable to the present claims and specification. Accordingly, early issuance of a Notice of Allowance is most earnestly solicited.

The undersigned has made a good faith effort to respond to all of the rejections in the case and to place the claims in condition for immediate allowance. Nevertheless, if any undeveloped issues remain or if any issues require clarification, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call Applicant's attorney in order to resolve such issue promptly.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

Dated: 9/27/05

By: 

Glen L. Nuttall
Registration No. 46,188
Attorney of Record
Customer No. 20,995
(949) 760-0404

1954089
092605